



## BRIEFING NOTE

### Scottish Parliamentary Elections 2007

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**party manifestos and tourism:  
a review of manifesto commitments**

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## Briefing Note: Scottish Parliamentary Elections 2007 Party Manifestos 2007 – tourism

### ***Introduction***

This briefing note has been prepared to assist organisations and individuals who are interested in tourism in Scotland. Tourism is a significant component of the Scottish economy, and it has an influence on other areas of policy such as transport and cultural heritage. This paper analyses the main political party's manifesto statements to see what commitments are being made with regard to tourism.

The methodology was to search through PDF versions of the manifestos using the key word "tourism". The statements found have been copied directly. Where possible, we have tried to outline only the actual manifesto commitments rather than the whole script and background information. The results are to be found below.

This paper has been prepared to assist in comparing the policies and commitments of the main political parties in Scotland in the run up to the Scottish Parliamentary elections on 3 May 2007. The Scottish Civic Trust is a charity registered in Scotland (SCO12569). As such, we are apolitical in nature, and offer no view on the nature or content of these manifesto statements.

Separate Briefing Notes have been prepared on the subjects of built environment (covering planning, architecture, housing, regeneration and landscape) and built heritage.

### ***Scottish Conservative Party***

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The promotion of Scotland abroad is vital to Scotland – culturally and economically. Tourism is one of Scotland's biggest industries and without it the economy would perform even more poorly than it has since 1997.

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We will also oppose any additional taxes on the tourist industry, and we will ensure that our new Scottish Skills Agency emphasises the opportunities which lie in the tourist industry.

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Scotland is uniquely different to the rest of Britain, and it is more appropriate for VisitScotland to promote Scotland in international markets as an all-year-round destination of choice. We will also investigate a closer working relationship between VisitScotland and Visit Britain to promote occupancy partnership at sites overseas.

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Many tourists enjoy Scottish arts and culture when they visit our nation. We are keen to see this sector flourish, however we are of the view that the bodies which oversee arts and culture face undue interference by the state.

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To complement our international reputation as a premier tourist destination, we believe that Scotland needs to enhance its status as a host of major world events.

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Tourism is a lifeline for rural communities and rural economies. The natural beauty of Scotland's rural environment goes a long way to securing the tourist trade, and our proposals on business rates and local regeneration, especially our Town Centre Regeneration Fund, will further support tourism. We will also review the operation of [visitscotland.com](http://visitscotland.com).

## ***Scottish Green Party***

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We will aim to build an all-year tourist industry led by locally-owned enterprises that encourages tourists to spend in Scotland's local economies.

- We will improve training to raise the skills and status of professionals in the tourism industry.
- [visitscotland.com](http://visitscotland.com) has failed to deliver, particularly in terms of its promises to small businesses, so we will bring it back under public ownership. We will better publicise the Green Tourism Business Scheme to encourage more businesses to join it, and we will strengthen its criteria and seek to grant-fund new green tourism projects.
- We will press for a comprehensive specialist weather forecast service for outdoor users in Scotland, freely available on the internet.

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Using public funds to boost domestic tourism would be better for our economy than subsidising cheap flights abroad. Our wider policies on personal carbon accounts and rail travel alternatives will reduce reliance on aviation, and cut unnecessary flights significantly.

## ***Scottish Labour Party***

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Recognising VisitScotland's worldwide success and expertise, we will transfer the responsibility for the overall promotion of Scotland out of the Scottish civil service and place it into VisitScotland.

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Scottish Labour will encourage more companies to take part and get accredited through the Green Tourism Business Scheme.

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Scottish Labour will build skills in the tourism industry and we will support training at all levels of the industry.

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Airports and aviation are making a growing contribution to our economic prosperity and Labour's Route Development Fund has created dozens of new direct air routes into Scotland. Scottish Labour will further develop connections for both business and tourism to other markets. We acknowledge the environmental impact of aviation and will continue to support international moves to tackle it.

P91

We will promote Scotland both at home and abroad so we can make a real contribution to meeting global challenges and can take advantage of the opportunities that exist to increase inward investment, in-migration and tourism.

### ***Scottish Liberal Democratic Party***

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Biodiversity has an important role to play in the social and economic life in Scotland, contributing to the well-being of Scotland through access to wildlife-rich green spaces and increasingly through green tourism jobs. Scottish Liberal Democrats want to protect and enhance Scotland's biodiversity through the effective implementation and enforcement of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) 2004 Act and the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, with more coordinated action to secure the effective protection of Scotland's threatened species and habitats.

P39

Scotland's landscape is celebrated around the world. It is cherished by people across Scotland and is a major part of the tourism experience for many visitors to Scotland. It is important that we protect this natural asset. We will consult on the options for new legislation to renew National Scenic Areas as a useful tool for protecting landscape.

P68

We want to support the industry to meet its ambitious target to grow Scottish tourism by 50 per cent by 2015. And because it is important that growth in tourism is sustainable, we will support an expansion of the Green Tourism Business Scheme to reward those businesses that rise to the green tourism challenge.

P85

We will ensure that VisitScotland drives forward the use of e-commerce for sales and marketing with continued improvement to the national portal website. We will support small tourism businesses to develop their online operations.

P85

Organisations to help diversify the tourism offering and improve the spread of visitors throughout the year. Scotland also has a growing reputation as a venue for business tourism and conferencing which we must continue to build on. And because it is important that growth in tourism is sustainable, we will support an expansion of the Green Tourism Business Scheme to reward those businesses that rise to the green tourism challenge.

P85

As part of our efforts to promote, celebrate and enhance our culture and heritage and build on our reputation as an excellent tourism destination, we will continue to promote measures to protect our historic environment,

### ***Scottish National Party***

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Refocus the Enterprise network to provide a more streamlined service for the Scottish business community and support key industries such as the tourism sector.

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We will bring together responsibility for enterprise, tourism and infrastructure under a single minister in the Department of Finance and Sustainable Growth, so that policy as a whole reflects the needs and interests of the industry.

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Key infrastructure improvements, including investment to reduce rail journey times between our major cities and reductions in business rates for small businesses will be of particular benefit to the tourism sector.

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We will also support new training for Scotland's tourism industry to maximise the use of and benefit from online marketing and sales opportunities.

### ***Scottish Socialist Party***

No reference

### ***Solidarity Scotland***

No direct references to tourism *per se*, other than the impact that it has on local housing in coastal areas.

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